

North Carolina Cooperative Extension Montgomery County

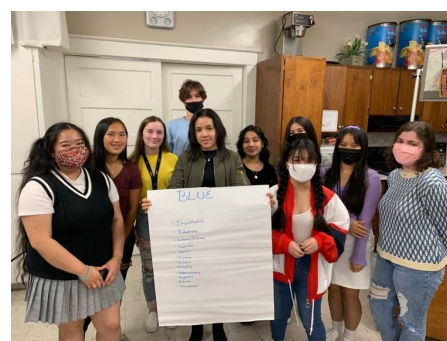


From the Director's Desk

February, 2022

The Montgomery County Cooperative Extension Staff is committed to serving the citizens of Montgomery County in the areas of Agriculture (Livestock and Horticulture), Family and Consumer Sciences and 4-H Youth Development. If you are unfamiliar with any of our programs, please stop by and visit us at 203 West Main Street, Troy. We would love to share all that we have to offer with you in person. We hope that you will take the time to read through our newsletter and reach out to us with any questions you may have or register for one of our upcoming programs.

Youth Leadership Montgomery students will be attending the County Commissioners meeting on Tuesday, February 15th and will attend the Montgomery County Schools Board meeting on March 7th to learn more about local government and how decisions are made within those boards. They will also complete a Tour of Undiscovered Places Day on February 14th. Due to the increase in Covid cases in January in the county, the MLK Challenge was postponed to March 11th. Students will have the opportunity to hear from a guest speaker and will pack bags of nonperishable food which will remain in Montgomery County to help feed local residents in need.



Pictured above: YLM students recently learned about personality styles during one of their meetings.

Our 4-H club members are working hard on their project record books which are due on February 21st to the Extension Office. Our 4-H Teens will attend the South Central District Teen Retreat at Millstone 4-H Camp in March. Youth will elect new district officers, will participate in the district skit competition, leadership and citizenship workshops, and will complete a community service project while there. We have begun planning our 4-H Summer Adventures Program and are currently looking for any volunteers who have a special talent, hobby or skill that you would like to share with youth of any age group (between 5 – 18 years old). Maybe you enjoy sewing or budgeting or cake decorating and would be willing to teach little minds to like the same, then we need YOU! Contact Chrissy Haynes to share your interests and we will plan a program around your needs.

We are also currently recruiting youth to attend Overnight Camp at Millstone 4-H Camp. Montgomery County youth receive a very large discount by registering to attend with our group of campers due to generous donations of business owners and community members in our county. We are so thankful for their continued support. If you are interested in sending your child to camp with us this year, please give Chrissy a call and let her know. Spaces are limited and fill up fast. Overnight camp dates are June 26th – July 1st.

For more information regarding 4-H programming in Montgomery County, please contact Chrissy Haynes at (910) 576-6011 or by email at chrissy_haynes@ncsu.edu

Agricultural Updates

Kaitlyn Lamaster, Horticulture

Tracy Blake, Livestock

Montgomery County Master Gardener Program

Despite the cold temperatures, the Montgomery County Master Gardener Volunteers took it upon themselves to have their first workday of the year on a chilly January morning. The pollinator garden at STARworks Center for Creative Enterprise was looked over first and assessed to be in good standing! Volunteers then set their course to the back of the building where new projects await!



The Volunteers plan to tackle some old fruit trees on February 9th to help give them shape and control the fruit set for better production and tree longevity. Stay tuned for a video that will highlight some of the steps used!



The next meeting is planned for Monday, February the 7th at 1PM at the Montgomery County Cooperative Extension Office. Ryan Saunders from the Sandhills Research Station will be coming to speak to the group about some of the projects that go on and answer any questions that might arise. If you are interested in joining the Master Gardener Program, contact Kaitlyn Lamaster at 910-576-6011 or email kmlamast@ncsu.edu.

Houseplants 101 Series Wrap-Up

The Houseplants 101 Series led by the Montgomery County Horticulture Agent, Kaitlyn Lamaster, finished up its final weeks in early January. The series held 6 informational online-sessions and 1 informal in-person plant exchange.

Some of the most important take-aways from the class include the importance of proper watering and devastation that comes from overwatering, the effects that improper lighting can have on plants and how to determine what that means, and how to properly ID and control insect pests that may arise.

If you have any questions regarding your houseplants, contact Kaitlyn Lamaster at kmlamast@ncsu.edu or call 910-576-6011

Tax Tips for Forest Owners

Understanding the ins and outs of taxation on forestland can be incredibly tricky. The US Forest Service, in partnership with the University of Georgia and University of Florida Extension released a short, 4-page factsheet outlining some of the most important aspects of land ownership to keep in mind for tax purposes.

The document can be found at:

<https://www.timbertax.org/publications/fs/taxtips/TaxTip2021.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2d0ilu3Rg62iC5OvmB7E79i9bWW6OnIXBCtBeMM5OTixhXZYzSVtU-0i0>

2022 North Carolina Peach Growers Society, Inc. Annual Meeting



The North Carolina Peach Growers Society was able to hold their annual meeting in-person 2 years after they had last been together. The meeting included a list of 10 presenters from North Carolina and beyond that all specialized in topics that would

help growers with their business. Professors and researchers affiliated with North Carolina State University, the University of Georgia, and Clemson University shared their latest findings with growers so they can stay up to date on current trends and policy shifts. Marketing programs, grant and cost share resources, and updates on farm law, status, and supply chains were shared as well.

The meetings can be found online on the North Carolina State University Peach Portal under "2022 Annual Meeting Presentations".

<https://peaches.ces.ncsu.edu/>



If you have any questions about the topics, reach out to Kaitlyn Lamaster at kmlamast@ncsu.edu

The Montgomery County Beekeepers

The Montgomery County Beekeepers met in January to recognize Nancy Rupert's retirement. Nancy served as a State Bee Inspector for 11 and a half years. In that time, she shared her knowledge with many.



Even at her retirement event, she acted as guest speaker, educating the beekeepers on when and how to perform a hive inspection. She will be missed as she transitions into retirement, but will still be an active part of our local beekeepers association.

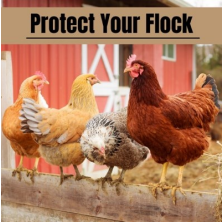


Montgomery County Cattlemen's Association



The Montgomery County Cattlemen meeting will be **Tuesday, February 8th at 6:30PM** at the Agricultural Center on Glen Rd. Speakers will include representatives from Southern States & Cargill discussing the rising cost of feed. For more information about Montgomery County Cattlemen's Association, contact Tracy Blake, 910-576-6011 or tracy_blake@ncsu.edu

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza has been identified in 53 hunter-harvested wild waterfowl in Hyde County, Pamlico/Beaufort County, & Bladen County. These are the first wild birds in the United States to have Eurasian H5 HPAI since 2016. The positive samples were collected by USDA as part of its

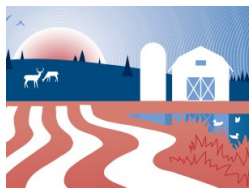


ongoing surveillance program for early detection of HPAI in collaboration with state wildlife agencies. All poultry owners are encouraged to **follow strict biosecurity measures for at least the next 30 days**. Biosecurity measures include keeping your birds isolated from other people and animals in an enclosed environment. Bird owners should also keep

their flock away from ponds where they might encounter migrating birds. For more information visit [NCDA&CS](https://www.ncda.gov/CS).

The Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program (SMHPP) provides pandemic assistance to hog producers who sold hogs through a negotiated sale from April 16, 2020 through September 1, 2020. USDA's Farm Service Agency will accept SMHPP applications from December 15, 2021, through **February 25, 2022**. Additional information is available at farmers.gov/smhpp.

Montgomery County is serviced by the Area FSA office located in Lee County. For help from this FSA office contact Marlo Dunn, County Executive Director at 919-775-3407 Ext. 2 or marlo.dunn@usda.gov



Farmers & land owners can get paid to conserve land for future generations. Enroll in the **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)** from **January 31-March 11**. Click the link for additional details about the program or contact the local FSA office, Marlo Dunn, County

Executive Director at 919-775-3407 Ext. 2 or marlo.dunn@usda.gov

<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/.../conservation-reserve.../index>



The deadline to apply for the **Migrant Housing Internet Connectivity Program** is **March 31, 2022**. This program provides reimbursement

to employers who improve internet connectivity in housing for migrant, seasonal, and H-2A employees. For internet connectivity solutions, contact: Natalie Rivera natalie.rivera@dhhs.nc.gov *CONSULT RECOMMENDED FOR FARMS HAVING MORE THAN 20 WORKERS IN ONE LOCATION.* To apply for reimbursement, contact the NC Agromedicine Institute: Robin Tutor Marcom @ tutorr@ecu.edu or 252.744.1008.



The **70th Annual North Carolina Cattlemen's Conference** will be held **February 25 – 26, 2022** at the Hickory Metro Convention Center in Hickory, NC. Register by **February 16** for early bird pricing. Registration available online or via mail.

<https://montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu/.../70th-annual-north.../>

The **10th Annual Piedmont Regional Beef Conference** will be held on **Thursday, March 3, 2022**, at the Chatham County Agriculture & Conference Center located at 1192 US 64W Business, Pittsboro, NC. Register by **Friday, February 18** for early bird pricing of \$20. **Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) Certification available**. Cost is \$15 for NCCA Members, \$40 for non-members.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/piedmont-regional-beef-conference-registration-224834073767>



Join the NC State Small Ruminant Improvement Team & North Carolina Sheep Producers Association for **Lambing & Kidding Workshop Saturday, February 12 from 10am-3pm** at the NCSU Small Ruminant Education Unit, Raleigh, NC. Cost is \$15 (lunch included) and spaces are limited. Register here to secure your space: <https://ncspa.wildapricot.org/event-4642527>

Join us for an introduction to goat ownership! Cost of workshop is \$20. Cash or check only.

Drinks, refreshments, and resources will be provided. Register by **Monday, March 7 at 5:00 PM**

To register for this workshop, please contact Liz Joseph at

liz_joseph@ncsu.edu or 914-489-5330.



The N.C. Agritourism Farm Tour & Conference will be held on Feb. 14-15, 2022 at the Rocky Mount Event Center in Rocky Mount. (Scholarships Available)

Agritourism offers working farms the opportunity to diversify and expand revenue streams by hosting visitors for education, recreation and entertainment. This meeting is for local and state leaders in agriculture, economic development and tourism too. Inject vibrancy in your community by spotlighting family friendly, local food and outdoor farm fun!

Please consider joining this meeting to include educational sessions with seasoned professionals and industry experts, invaluable networking and an outdoor farm tour experience. Sign up early and save! Early bird registration ends Jan. 15, 2022. Scholarships Available!! <https://nc-ana.org/.../nc-agritourism-2022-farm-tour...>

Links of Interest:

The Visit NC Farms App (Download Today!): <https://www.visitncfarmstoday.com/>

Livestock Newsletter:

<https://montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu/livestock-newsletter/>

NC Horse Blog: <http://nchorse.blogspot.com/>

Farms Food & You Podcast (New Emerging Crop: Cigar Wrapper Tobacco): <https://cals.ncsu.edu/farms-food-and-you/>

Better Business Practices for Farmers & Growers



In this two day workshop, producers will learn modern strategies for marketing their products and learn about community partners which can help solidify and grow their business.

Thursday, March 17th, 9am-Noon
Facebook is for Farmers:
Social Media and Marketing Day



Thursday March 24th, 9am-Noon
Let's Get Down to Business:
Grants, Farm Status, Tax Exemption, & more



**NC COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION**



Attend in Person at Montgomery County Center
or Virtually Via Zoom

To register, call
910-576-6011 or visit:
<https://forms.gle/CWpYyFfwXBm1bRHD8>



Family & Consumer Sciences Updates

Rhonda Peters, FCS Agent

Elizabeth Thompson, Nutrition Educator

Make Heart Health Part of Your Self-Care Routine especially during American Heart Month

Devoting a little time every day to care for yourself can go a long way toward protecting the health of your heart. Simple self-care, such as taking a moment to de-stress, giving yourself time to move more, preparing healthier meals, and not cheating on sleep can all benefit your heart.

And that's a good thing, because heart disease is largely preventable and focusing on improving your heart health has never been more important. Heart disease is a leading cause of death for women and men in the United States, and many Americans remain at risk of getting it, according to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI). People with poor cardiovascular health are also at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

"Studies show self-care routines, such as taking a daily walk and keeping doctor's appointments, help us keep our blood pressure in the healthy range and reduce our risk of heart disease and stroke," said David Goff, M.D., NHLBI's director of cardiovascular sciences.



It may be easier than you think to "put your heart" into your daily routine. Each Sunday, look at your week's schedule and carve out 30 minutes daily for heart-healthy practices. Take an online yoga class, prepare a heart-healthy recipe, schedule your bedtime to get at least seven hours of sleep, or make a medication checklist. Then seek out support from others, even if it's online or via a phone call, to help you stick to your goals. Share this information with other friends and family members during February, which is American Heart Health Month.

Real Money, Real World at Montgomery Early College

We were beyond excited to plan and implement the RMRW project at the Early College in January. With the help of many community volunteers who staffed 14 business booths, 9th – 12th grade students at Montgomery County Early College participated in a Real Money, Real World simulation on January 13. Students were assigned a career, a monthly salary and a specific number of children. Each student visited the various booths making spending choices based on their family situation hoping they would have enough money to make ends meet at the end of the month.

Students assumed the role of a 27-year-old adult who is the primary income provider for a family. They received an occupation, monthly salary and the number of children they are raising. Students spent their money at booths staffed by community volunteers on items typically found in a monthly budget including housing, utilities, groceries, insurance, child care, and transportation. Throughout the activity, students kept track of their finances and attempted to complete the simulation with a positive ending balance.

One of the biggest surprises to participants at both events was the cost of child care. One youth, who came into the simulation with only an \$1,800 monthly salary and two children, was discouraged to discover at the child care booth that daycare for his two children would be over \$800. Volunteers at the Financial Advice booth assisted him in getting a second part-time job after he discovered that "giving his children back" was not an option.

After the simulation, students reflected on their experience and what they learned by completing a self-assessment. The students thoroughly enjoyed their experience but were shocked at how hard it was to meet a monthly budget. Many had newfound respect for their parents and what they deal with on a daily basis. In a follow-up conversation with a parent of an Early College student, the mother reported getting a phone call in the middle of the event from her daughter just to say thank you for all she does as a parent. Comments from other parents indicate that the event sparked important conversations at home and opened communication about budgeting.

At the end of the experience, student comments included, "Kids are expensive," "I need to stay in school and graduate in order to get a better job later," "I was thinking of not going to college, but I sure am going now!", and "life is a whole lot harder than I thought." Students also reported learning the value of paying for things they had to have (needs) before budgeting for the things they just wanted to have, and the importance of saving – "I'm going to start saving – like TODAY!"

Follow-up studies with Real Money, Real world program implementation across the country indicate that students report significant changes in their financial behavior after the program. Over 80% of participants report changes in the extent to which they now repay money owed on time, set aside money for the future, and compare prices. Over three-fourths of students indicated they now think more carefully about spending money. This event absolutely would not be possible without the generous volunteer time provided by more than thirty community members, school personnel, agency and business representatives, and even town officials. This is continued evidence of how working together truly makes a positive impact.



Teen Cooking Club

Our January club meeting focused on finding the fat in food items. Fat IS important to our bodies, but we have to be careful which fats and how much we get. Fat from healthy sources keeps skin soft and hair shiny, helps absorb important nutrients in the body, insulates from the cold, and protects the organs. But fats are calories-dense. One gram has 9 calories, compared to carbohydrates and proteins, which have only 4 calories per gram. Saturated fats and trans fats have been shown to contribute to heart disease. There are different kinds of fat, so it is important to know what kind is in different foods. Fats from plant sources, like olive oil, nuts, and avocados are healthier. They can protect us from heart disease when eaten in the right amount. Fats from land animal sources, like beef and poultry, tend to be less healthy and can lead to heart disease when consumed in large quantities. Seafood is a special case because it contains very healthy fats. It is recommended that you get two servings each week of seafood like salmon, tuna and white fish. When you are trying to be healthy on the go, consider looking for options with fruits and vegetables, looking for whole-grain breads, pastas and cereals, ordering smaller portion sizes, and limiting cheese, mayonnaise-based sauces and dressings, and fried foods. Also, remember that you shouldn't drink your calories. Milkshakes and blended coffee drinks can hide a lot of fat. To put this into practice, youth tried their hands at preparing oven baked chicken nuggets and oven baked mozzarella tots. All young people participated in recipe preparation, clean up, and, of course, taste-testing!



Cooking with Extension

We continued our Cooking with Extension program with Troy-Montgomery Senior Center in January with a demonstration of a creamy broccoli and cheese soup. Broccoli is a nutrient-rich vegetable that may enhance your health in a number of ways, such as reducing inflammation, improving blood sugar control, boosting immunity and promoting heart health. Remember, the federal government recommends that all adults get an average 2 to 3 cups of vegetables per day as part of a healthy eating pattern. Sneaking vegetables in with other foods (like in a soup) is a nice way to up your veggie intake without having to think of it as just a side dish. This video series is important because it helps give ideas for healthy foods and additions that people may not have previously considered. For example, one viewer wrote in that she had never considered adding celery to a broccoli soup but she tried it and loved it when she made it at home. Feedback like this helps us know we are truly being relevant and impactful in our Facebook live programming. We welcome your comments and ideas for future recipes and demonstrations! Send any feedback, input or ideas you have to rtjpeters@ncat.edu.



Powerful Families, Powerful Communities Program



We are excited to implement another season of PFPC in our community! We have recruited an additional facilitator, Mrs. Maggie Gibbons, who currently serves as the Health Education Supervisor with the Montgomery County Department of Health. Our Family and Consumer Science Agent and Maggie attended a three-day training in January

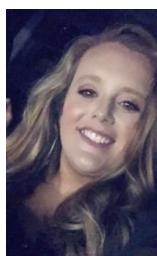
and February to be fully prepared to best serve our community. The program focuses on strengthening family relationships to help prevent opioid misuse. The program includes a weekly session for ten weeks with FREE FOOD where youth and parents engage in a learning environment that is fun and beneficial. Families receive all kinds of helpful tools and resources to continue expanding and building skills at home. At the conclusion of the ten weeks, families go away together for a fun weekend at camp to learn even more and begin planning a community event to share what they've learned with the community. All of this is provided at NO COST to the families. If you have a middle school aged youth and are excited about making a difference in your family and community by participating in this highly impactful program, please contact Chrissy Haynes or Rhonda Peters by calling (910) 576-6011.

Sharing Impacts

On Wednesday, February 2nd, our FCS Agent was honored to be invited to speak as part of the 1890 Center of Excellence for Nutrition, Health, Wellness and Quality of Life symposium. Together with Shewana Hairston-McSwain, Try Healthy SNAP-Ed Coordinator with NC A&T State University, the pair educated participants about current programming offered through our land grant institution and the positive impacts being made in our communities. It was indeed an honor for our FCS Agent to be included as a speaker for this event. Peters was selected based on the successful implementation of programs in Montgomery County and her enthusiasm for the Try Healthy program.



Elizabeth's Nutrition Nuggets



I finished up Go, Glow, Grow at Wescare with the three and four-year-old classes. I had a fun time working with this group of kids. I'm starting up Go, Glow, Grow at Troy Elementary and Green Ridge February 8th. I have two classes at each school, so I am super excited about that! I am looking to start up a LIFT program in the community because I have not done a LIFT class and I really enjoy doing that because I have helped Rhonda out with some of her

classes and I really enjoy working with the seniors to keep them moving and getting stronger. LIFT is a team building program that promotes healthy lifestyle behaviors for aging adults. It truly is an awesome program!



Check out our current videos by visiting

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOlPmzMobAJoawefJK_ldzA

Be Good to Your Heart

If you were to try to figure out what Valentine's Day was all about just by checking the grocery store shelves, you would think it was a celebration of nothing more than overpriced candy. Instead of chowing down on artery-clogging foods this Valentine's Day, be good to your heart and try a healthful treat or two instead. Looking for inspiration? Try these delicious dipped strawberries! If you are not a fan of light cream cheese, you could use dark chocolate instead.

Ingredients:

- 1 lb fresh strawberries (12-15)
- 1 cup light cream cheese
- 2 tablespoons each: pistachios, almonds, dried pineapple, dried cranberries, chopped chocolate chips



Directions:

- Wash strawberries under cold, running water. Pat dry and set aside.
- Place cream cheese in a small, microwave-safe glass bowl. Cover and microwave until cheese is soft and warm, about 30 seconds. Stir well.
- Place chopped pistachios in a small bowl or ramekin. Repeat with other dipping ingredients.
- Dip strawberries in cream cheese, then into one of the chopped options. Place dipped strawberries on a small plate, then refrigerate to firm up the cream cheese.
- Serve chilled.

Nutrition Information: This recipe makes 6 servings. Each serving (2-3 strawberries) contains 140 calories, 10 grams of fat, 4 grams of saturated fat, 0 grams of trans fat, 22 milligrams of cholesterol, and 189 milligrams of sodium. It also has 5 grams of sugar, 2 grams of fiber, 9 grams of carbohydrates, and 5 grams of protein.

Don't Miss these Awesome Events Coming Up in FCS

(see our website or Facebook page for more information about any of these opportunities)

Friday, February 4, 2022 Teen Cooking Club (4-6 pm)

Monday, February 7, 2022 Go, Glow, Grow Begins at Star Elementary

Tuesday, February 8, 2022 Go, Glow, Grow Begins at Troy Elementary

Wednesday, February 9, 2022 Cooking Live with Extension (FB Live)

Thursday, February 10, 2022 Go, Glow, Grow Begins at Green Ridge Elementary

Thursday, March 3, 2022 Eat Smart, Live Strong Begins at Dover Baptist Church

Thursday, March 3, 2022 Air Fryer Class in collaboration with Better Together Montgomery

Staff Directory



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Ask Extension

The North Carolina Cooperative Extension is a service that is meant to help serve the general community, both professionally and personally. If you have questions regarding any topic within Horticulture, Livestock, Family and Consumer Science, or Youth Development please do not hesitate to reach out! The office can be called at 910-576-6011 and your question will be directed to the agent that best fits your category. Emails can also be sent directly to agents that you feel would best know the answer. It is a good idea to include pictures if you have a specific situation at hand. The list of agents can be found at <https://montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu/people/>.

STAY UPDATED!!!!



If you haven't "liked" us or "followed" us on Facebook, take the time to do it today! Our facebook and webpages are updated regularly with news articles, posts, and pictures of current and future programs as well as news you can use. Find us at <https://www.facebook.com/North-Carolina-Cooperative-Extension-Montgomery-County-117219574995061/> and on our website www.montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu. If you would like to be added to our email distribution list, please email Kim_Gibson@ncsu.edu